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21st ANNUAL REPORT of the AURORA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 1941

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To Promote the Civic, Industrial, Commercial and Social Welfare of Aurora

To the Members:

It cannot be too deeply impressed upon our thoughts that the Chamber of Commerce has a vital and definite job to do in the all-out effort that must bring victory to our national cause.

Each such business organization in its community must be alert, cooperative and constantly able to render service to the multitude of governmental agencies which call for assistance in many different ways.

Besides carrying on the normal program of promotion for trade, industry and civic welfare in 1941, your chamber has intensively engaged in work for national defense. That has been a growing function recognized by the chamber as early as 1939.

All that has or can be done is by cooperation which is deeply appreciated by your officers and directors.

We commend this Annual Report to your consideration.

Yours respectfully,

A. L. PODOLAK,
President

HOWARD N. YATES,
Executive Secretary

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ACTIVITIES REPORT

in brief . . . .

AGRICULTURAL

Host to 1000 rural school children from Kane, Kendall, DuPage and Will Counties for the Second Annual Rural Youth Day.

Awarded 2nd Annual Trophy in the Neatest Dairy Farm Contest of the Fox Valley Pure Milk Association.

Awarded trophy in the Big Rock Plowing Match.

Conducted 12th Annual 4-H Club Chamber of Commerce Corn Contest.

Was host to the Annual Kane County Farm Bureau Convention.

AVIATION

Vigorously and consistently presented to the U. S. Army Air Corps the advantages of the proposed new Aurora Airport for national defense purposes. Made numerous trips to Washington in this effort. Have received careful and specific consideration by the government. Sincerely feel that continued effort along this line will be eventually rewarded.

Continued to cooperate with the non-college ground school of Aeronautics which the chamber aided in establishing in 1940.

CONVENTION

Entertained and assisted a number of state and district conventions including—Illinois Tuberculosis Association; Illinois Typographical Conference; Knights of Columbus State Convention; Lions State Convention; State Meeting of 40 and 8 Veterans; Illinois Association of Refrigeration Service Engineers Society 4th Annual Convention; Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen and Auxiliary Convention; Local Division 357 Ladies Auxiliary to Division 32 Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers State Meeting; and Kane County Farm Bureau Meeting.

All of this has meant new dollars placed in the channel of Aurora business. On a national average of $10.00 per day per delegate it has meant a sum in excess of $100,000.

INDUSTRIAL

Conducted banquet in honor of the Veterans in Industry. Awarded certificates of honor to the men and women of Aurora industries serving their respective firms for twenty-five or more years.

Protested the cut in locker and metal furniture production which threatened Aurora locker manufacturers.

Carried on the essential negotiations for the location of the branch factory of the Elgin National Watch Company for the manufacture of artificial jewels used in precision war instruments. The plant will begin its installation operations on February 1, 1942.

Continued work on negotiations begun June 7th, 1940 for a substantial large new industry. Negotiations proceeding with necessary adjustments for war conditions. Will continue effort so long as the issue remains open.

Investigated, corresponded with and visited a number of industrial prospects.

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Advertised and publicized Aurora's Industrial advantages in statewide papers and magazines.

See NATIONAL DEFENSE and TRAFFIC BUREAU for services to industries.

INDUSTRIAL ACCOUNTANTS

Held regular monthly meetings, with exception of summer vacation period, bringing together the industrial accountants and comptrollers of member firms. Each meeting presented the opportunity to discuss problems of accounting which face the average firm. In numerous instances speakers, expert in their line, were brought in to lead the discussion.

LEGISLATION AND TAXATION

Made known to legislators of this district, both state and national, the views of this organization on pending legislation, supporting legislation believed to be to the welfare of Aurora and opposing that not considered beneficial.

Furnished members with valuable information concerning Occupational Sales Tax, Wage and Hour Law, Old Age Benefit Law, and Unemployment Compensation Laws.

MEMBERSHIP

Serviced members in numerous ways through the answering of miscellaneous inquiries.

Conducted the 20th Annual Meeting and Banquet at which Mr. Tom Collins was the guest speaker.

Held the Fall Membership Frolic at the Aurora Country Club, on August 27th.

Held a "Get Acquainted Dinner" with the newly elected city officials on the evening of May 14th.

Issued for the members the monthly index of Aurora Business containing the following information: Industrial Employment, Sales Tax Paid in Kane County, Number Credit Reports, Bank Clearings, Bank Debits, Postal Receipts, Building Permits, Telephones in Service, New Passenger Car Sales, Relief Cases, No. Placements by Illinois State Employment Service, W.P.A. Employment.

MODERN HOMES EXPOSITION

March 11, 12, 13, 14 conducted the 2nd Annual Modern Homes Exposition at the Aurora Cotton Mills Building, at which 60 exhibitors acted the host to 23,000 visitors.

Assisted the F.H.A. in clinics with contractors during the year.

NATIONAL DEFENSE

As early as the spring of 1939 the chamber has carried on national defense work. Pearl Harbor merely intensified the effort.

Almost daily the chamber receives requests from some department of the government for cooperation in the war program. The Treasury, the War Department, the Navy, the Air Corps, the F.H.A., the F.B.I., the Priorities and Allocation Board, the O.P.M. and others have looked to the local chamber for contacts and for dispersing important information which it desires to pass on to business, industry and the public. Innumerable surveys have been made by the chamber for such departments. Daily the office keeps in touch with contracts opened for bids on all sorts and types of war goods and passes this information on to local industries that might be interested.

To the chamber comes material for advertising and promoting the sale of Defense Stamps and Bonds.

Since last July the chamber has furnished the staff for the work of the Aurora Council of Defense.

War has certainly increased the usefulness and the need of the chamber of commerce in the community.

PUBLICITY

Printed a new four color descriptive folder advertising Aurora and distributed thousands of these through many channels of publicity.

Provided constant news items on chamber activities in local papers.

Issued monthly Aurora Progress.

Provided material and pictures for stories in metropolitan papers and national and state magazines.

TRAFFIC (Freight) BUREAU

A new department, the Freight Traffic Bureau was established and placed in operation by the Freight Traffic Committee, with a full time, experienced traffic commissioner in charge.

It is the function of this newly established department to render a general traffic service which includes freight rate quotations, classification and rate adjustment, handling of claims, expediting shipments, auditing freight bills and in general, to protect the transportation advantages of the community.

RETAIL

Conducted following trade promotion events: February Semi-Annual Dollar Day, Spring Opening Week, Clean-up Paint-up Week, Two Aurora Days, August Semi-Annual Dollar Day, Back to School Week, Fall Opening, Farm Home Week, plus various Month-end Sales.

Presented a Fashion and Fabric clinic under the direction of Miss Mari Floto and with the cooperation of the East and West Boards of Education, also Illinois Department of Vocational Education.

Cooperated with the Illinois Federation of Retail Associations and members of the General Assembly in a legislative program that secured for retailing many needed and worthwhile laws, such as elimination of tax on a tax, reduction of sales tax to 2% and the anti-industrial wholesale purchase act.

Presented the 3rd Annual "Santa on Parade" the largest and most spectacular ever presented in Aurora. This was done by cooperation of the Aurora Playground Commission, and the W.P.A.

Installed the Christmas Lighting System of evergreen wreaths and lights in the downtown business district, receiving expressions of approval from many individuals and organizations.

MISCELLANEOUS

Maintain a clearing house of commercial, industrial and civic information.

Maintain a file of civic and fraternal organizations and their principal officers.

Answered hundreds of inquires by mail, telephone, or wire about all phases of Aurora's business and industry.

Maintain a library of city directories of over 125 cities.

Warned business and citizens of known petty commercial and other rackets.

Did the multitude of little things that would go undone if there were not organized effort to do them.

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1941 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

ARTHUR L. PODOLAK - - - - President
R. L. SAVAGE - - - - First Vice President
R. A. BARKER - - - - Second Vice President
N. P. BACHERT - - - - - - - Treasurer

A. G. Bale	W. B. Greene
W. E. Brennan	E. M. Frank
G. N. Bryan	J. Potteiger
L. M. Doolen	J. C. Schmitz
Dr. J. W. Dreyer	B. F. Sears
A. J. Erlenborn	C. W. Tennant

JOHN ALEXANDER, Jr. - - National Councillor

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1941 COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Automobile Dealers' Association - Charles T. Greene
Aviation - - - - - - - - D. P. Frazier
Agricultural - - - - - - - - F. W. Zabel
Civic Affairs - - - - - - - L. M. Doolen
Convention - - - - - - - - Ward Gosselin
Education - - - - - - - - Carl Larson
Finance - - - - - - - - J. Carl Schmitz
Freight Traffic - - - - - E. R. McKnight
Health - - - - - - - - Dr. A. S. Bensen
Industrial - - - - - - - - W. E. Brennan
Industrial Accounts Division - - - F. D. Keck
Legislative Affairs - - - - John Alexander, Jr.
Membership Expansion - - - - R. A. Barker
Merchants' Division, Executive Committee - - - - - - - - - - - - - Jack Stewart
Publicity - - - - - - - - C. W. Tennant
Roads - - - - - - - - - G. N. Bryan
Speaker - - - - - - - - Clarence Biever

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STAFF

Howard N. Yates - - - - Executive Secretary
W. H. Abel - - - Freight Traffic Commissioner
Alma V. Keeler - Secretary Membership and Accounts
Virginia M. Jones - - Secretary of Correspondence

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